



**CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM**

1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, California 95814

(916) 657-2666
FAX **(916) 654-9780**

July 10, 1997

The Honorable Tim Leslie
Member of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 4081
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Leslie:

This letter is in response to your letter dated June 27, 1997 which supported a request for a 90 day extension for written public comments. CALFED is providing this response to assist in clarifying various CALFED activities and timing as well as to explain the inappropriateness of delaying the Category III Request for Proposals (RFP) process. It appears that many of the concerns can be addressed by understanding the broader CALFED process and the past, present and future effort at outreach and public involvement.

The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore the ecological health and improve water management for beneficial use of the Bay-Delta system. This Program was initiated in 1995 and has been implementing a three phase process to develop a solution to the Bay-Delta issues. Phase I, defining the scope of the effort and the preliminary assessment of a full range of alternatives, concluded in September, 1996 with the broad outline of three potential alternatives and common programs. Phase II, currently underway, consists of programmatic level analysis and evaluation of the impacts and benefits of the three alternatives, leading to the selection of a draft preferred alternative by the end of 1997. Phase III will include the specific project analysis and implementation, and will begin in late 1998. Enclosed are several Program updates that provide more information on progress to date and planned activities.

The Program actively works with interested parties and the general public. We have held multiple workshops, public meetings, workgroups and individual meetings with interested parties. The mailing list includes well over a thousand entities. The enclosed calender demonstrates the range of outreach being employed.

CALFED Agencies

California

The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal

Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

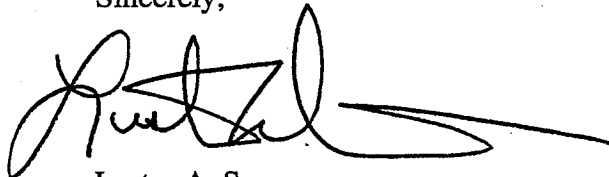
The Honorable Tim Leslie
July 10, 1997
Page Two

Recognizing the need for initiating appropriate near-term activities toward the restoration of the Bay-Delta Estuary while the long-term solution is being developed, there are many actions that need to be taken, and can be taken now to improve the health of aquatic and terrestrial species and habitats of the Delta and its tributaries. An RFP has been issued for these near-term activities with funding of \$60 million from Proposition 204 and \$10.5 million of direct stakeholder contributions. The objective of this RFP is to fund actions which address non-flow related factors that negatively impact the health of the Bay-Delta estuary. These factors include unscreened diversions, loss of habitat, water quality problems, adverse effects of fish and wildlife harvest, to name but a few. Funding will be directed toward projects which begin to 1) reduce conflicts in the Bay-Delta ecosystem, 2) focus on high risk species and habitats, and 3) provide broad ecosystem benefits. The Category III projects will be integrated with restoration projects funded through other sources, such as the Central Valley Project Improvement Act.

Proposals for this round of funding are due by July 28. However, another RFP (which will likely include federal funding) will be issued in early 1998.

We believe that the sequential RFP processes combined with the opportunities for comment on the CALFED Program indicate that delay is not necessary and could seriously delay vital progress on critical projects. I would be glad to meet with you or your concerned constituents to discuss this matter further. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact me at (916) 657-2666.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lester A. Snow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Enclosures